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UP THE MARINES!



TOP

**SOCCER STAR
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**...that top
football
character—
"ROY of the
ROVERS"...**

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TIGER

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★ *All boys vote—"IT'S **TOPS!**"*

UP THE MARINES!

OF ALL THE TOUGH AND DARING COMMANDO GROUPS WHICH HARRIED THE GERMANS MERCILESSLY BY LAND AND SEA IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR, ONE ALONE FOUGHT WITH A TRADITION OF VALOUR BEHIND IT, CENTURIES OLD. THIS WAS THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO.



Chapter 1. **THEY STRIKE BY NIGHT**

BY NIGHT, THESE MEN WERE THE BOLD CORSAIRS OF THE ENEMY COAST; BY DAY, THE SPIT AND POLISH BRIGADE OF THE BARRACK SQUARE. BUT NOW IT WAS NIGHT, IN 1943, AT THE MOUTH OF A NORWEGIAN FIORD...

THE JERRY CONVOY'S DUE IN THE FIORD IN FIFTEEN MINUTES, LIEUTENANT! YOU'LL HAVE TO BE SHARP WITH THOSE BUOY LIGHTS! I'LL STAY ON THE SURFACE FOR THIRTY MINUTES TO PICK YOU UP, THEN I DIVE.... WHETHER YOU'RE HERE OR NOT!

WE'LL BE HERE, SIR! AND THE LIGHTS WILL BE OUT!

THE TASK OF THE MARINE COMMANDOS WAS TO SABOTAGE THE LIT BUOYS WHICH WOULD GUIDE THE EXPECTED GERMAN SUPPLY CONVOY THROUGH THE JAGGED ROCKS TO THE HARBOUR AT THE HEART OF THE FIORD.

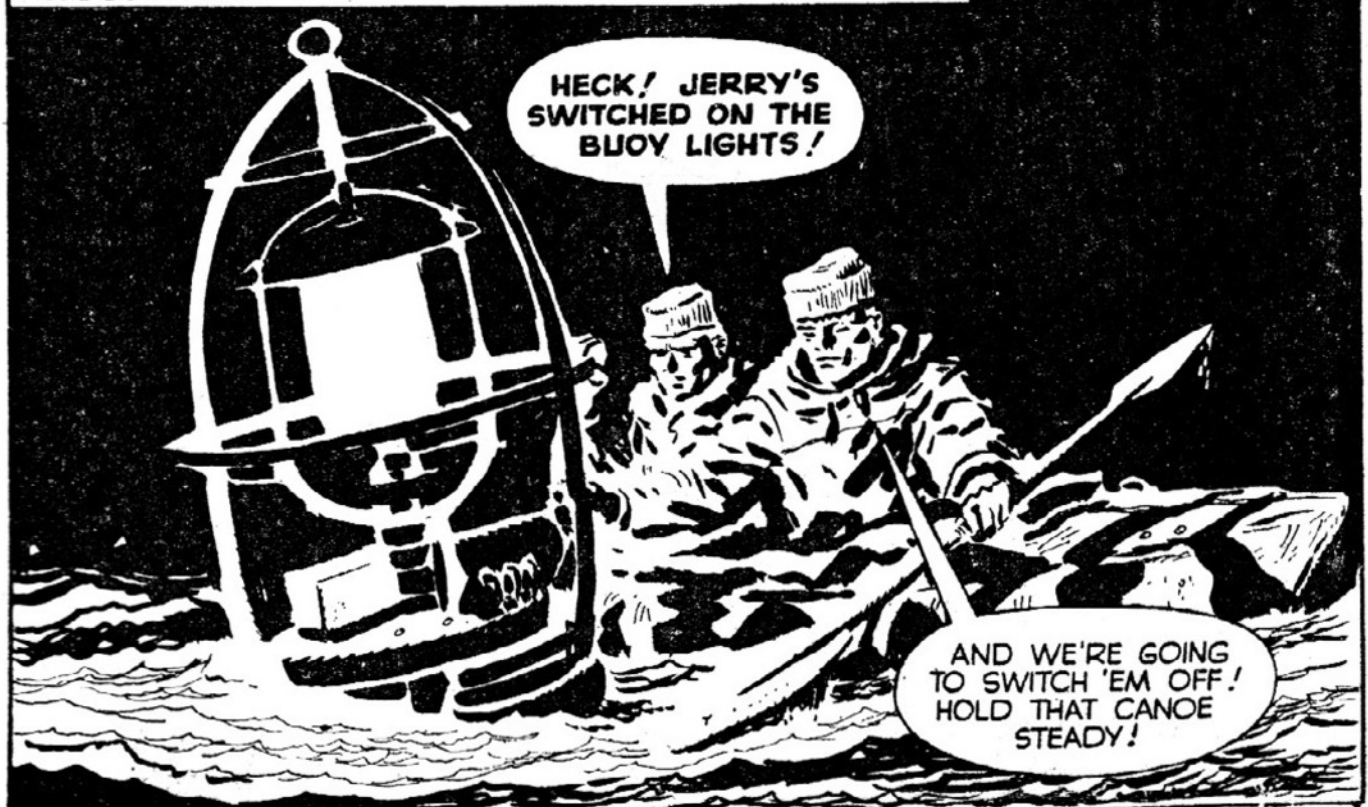
GOOD HUNTING, THE MARINES!



SILENTLY THE FIVE CANOES GLIDED INTO THE HOSTILE DARKNESS. AS THE IRON CAGE OF THE FIRST BUOY LOOMED UP...



SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT WAS A VETERAN OF A HUNDRED WILD COMMANDO SORTIES. THE HANDS WHICH GROPED FOR THE FLEX WERE QUICK AND COOL, EVEN WHEN, SUDDENLY...



Up the Marines!

ASHORE, AN UNSUSPECTING GERMAN HAND HAD PRESSED THE POWER SWITCH TO ILLUMINATE THE BUOYS. THE CONVOY WAS DUE...



TEN MORE LIGHTS TO DOUSE, SERGEANT! KEEP IT UP!

ROGER, SIR! I WISH WE COULD STAY TO SEE THAT JERRY CONVOY BLUNDERING ABOUT IN THE DARK!

LIEUTENANT MOOREHEAD'S VOICE WAS LIGHT AND ZESTFUL BUT FOUR MILES AWAY AT THE MOUTH OF THE FIORD, A GERMAN OFFICER SPOKE IN A DIFFERENT TONE...



ORDER THE CONVOY TO CLOSE UP! I HAVE NOT RUN THE GAUNTLET OF THE BRITISH NAVY TO LOSE MY PRECIOUS SHIPS IN THESE INFERNAL NORWEGIAN FIORDS! ACH, I SEE THE BUOYS NOW... BUT FOUR OF THEM ONLY! WHAT IS THIS?

FOR THREE DAYS ON THE NORTHERN RUN FROM HAMBURG, THE GERMAN CONVOY COMMANDER HAD NERVOUSLY DODGED THE BRITISH PATROLS. NOW, WITHIN SIGHT OF SAFETY, A NEW DANGER TIGHTENED HIS NERVES.

NUMBER NINE DEALT WITH, SIR!

GOOD WORK, SERGEANT! I'LL LEAVE YOU TO DEAL WITH THE LAST ONE WHILE I COLLECT THE OTHER CHAPS! FOLLOW US BACK TO THE SUB AS SOON AS YOU CAN.

THE MARINE COMMANDOS' STEALTHY WORK WAS ALMOST FINISHED. AT THE LAST BUOY, SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT AND HIS CREWMATE, LANCE CORPORAL BOB YOUNGER, WORKED COOLLY AGAINST TIME.

AS THE CUTTERS SHEARED THROUGH THE FLEX, DARKNESS DESCENDED ON THE FIORD. IT WAS A DARKNESS WHICH WOULD HIDE THE FRAIL CRAFT AND ITS INTREPID OCCUPANTS ON THEIR PERILOUS RETURN JOURNEY.

ONE THING, THERE'S PLENTY OF LIGHT TO DO THE JOB BY!

ME, I LIKE IT DARK! HURRY UP, SARGE, FOR PETE'S SAKE!



Up the Marines!

BUT THAT DARKNESS HELD TERROR FOR THE COMMANDER OF THE INCOMING GERMAN CONVOY. WITH NO LIGHTS TO GUIDE THEM ALONG THE SAFE LANE BETWEEN THE ROCKS, SHARP-FANGED DESTRUCTION THREATENED THE CARGO SHIPS UNDER HIS CARE.



DRIVING THEIR PADDLES INTO THE ICY WATER WITH SMOOTH BUT POWERFUL STROKES, THE TWO COMMANDOS THRUST THEIR CANOE SILENTLY TOWARDS THE OPEN SEA.



BUT EVEN AS THE CANOE LEAPED FORWARD...



A PITILESS WHITE GLARE SUDDENLY BATHED THE SMALL CANOE IN TELL-TALE LIGHT. FOR A SHARP MOMENT, THE TWO MARINES WERE BLINDED. THEN THE SHAFT OF LIGHT SWEEPED ON...



Up the Marines!

AT THE MOUTH OF THE FIORD, A SPIT OF LAND JUTTED OUT INTO THE SEA. ON THAT SHELF OF ROCK THE GERMANS HAD BUILT A LIGHTHOUSE, AND TONIGHT IT SEEMED THAT THEIR FORESIGHT WAS TO BE REWARDED.

NO ONE
KNEW ABOUT
THIS LIGHTHOUSE!
BUT IF THEY KEEP THEIR
LIGHT ON, THAT JERRY
CONVOY'S GOING TO GET
UP THE FIORD
SAFELY!

AND ALL
OUR WORK WILL
BE WASTED!

THE WHEELING FINGERS OF LIGHT PROBED OUT INTO THE BLACK FIORD, BRINGING JUBILANT RELIEF TO A HARASSED GERMAN OFFICER...

SO! THE
LIGHTHOUSE AT
LEAST IS
OPERATING! IS
GOOD!

IN THE LAST CANOE, BOB YOUNGER BREATHED A REGRETFUL THOUGHT.

IT'S A PITY
WE CAN'T PUT
THAT LIGHT OUT
LIKE WE DID THE
BUOYS, SARGE!

A PITY,
IS IT? I
WONDER...

THAT THOUGHT HAD ALREADY STRUCK SERGEANT SWIFT, AND NOW A DEADLY SMILE LIT THE COOL EYES OF THE VETERAN MARINE...

SARGE,
YOU DON'T
THINK...

I DO, BOB!
WE'VE HAD NO ORDERS.
THAT LIGHTHOUSE IS
PROBABLY CRAMMED WITH
JERRY TROOPS, AND THERE'S
ONLY TWO OF US - BUT
WE'RE MARINES, AREN'T WE?

THE SERGEANT'S ORDERS HAD INCLUDED NO MENTION OF A LIGHTHOUSE. BUT THE LIGHTHOUSE WAS THERE AND UNLESS IT WAS EXTINGUISHED THE GERMAN CONVOY WOULD GET THROUGH.

OKAY BY ME,
SARGE! WE'LL
TAKE THAT
LIGHTHOUSE APART!
UP THE MARINES!



AT THAT MOMENT, NEAR THE LIGHTHOUSE ITSELF...



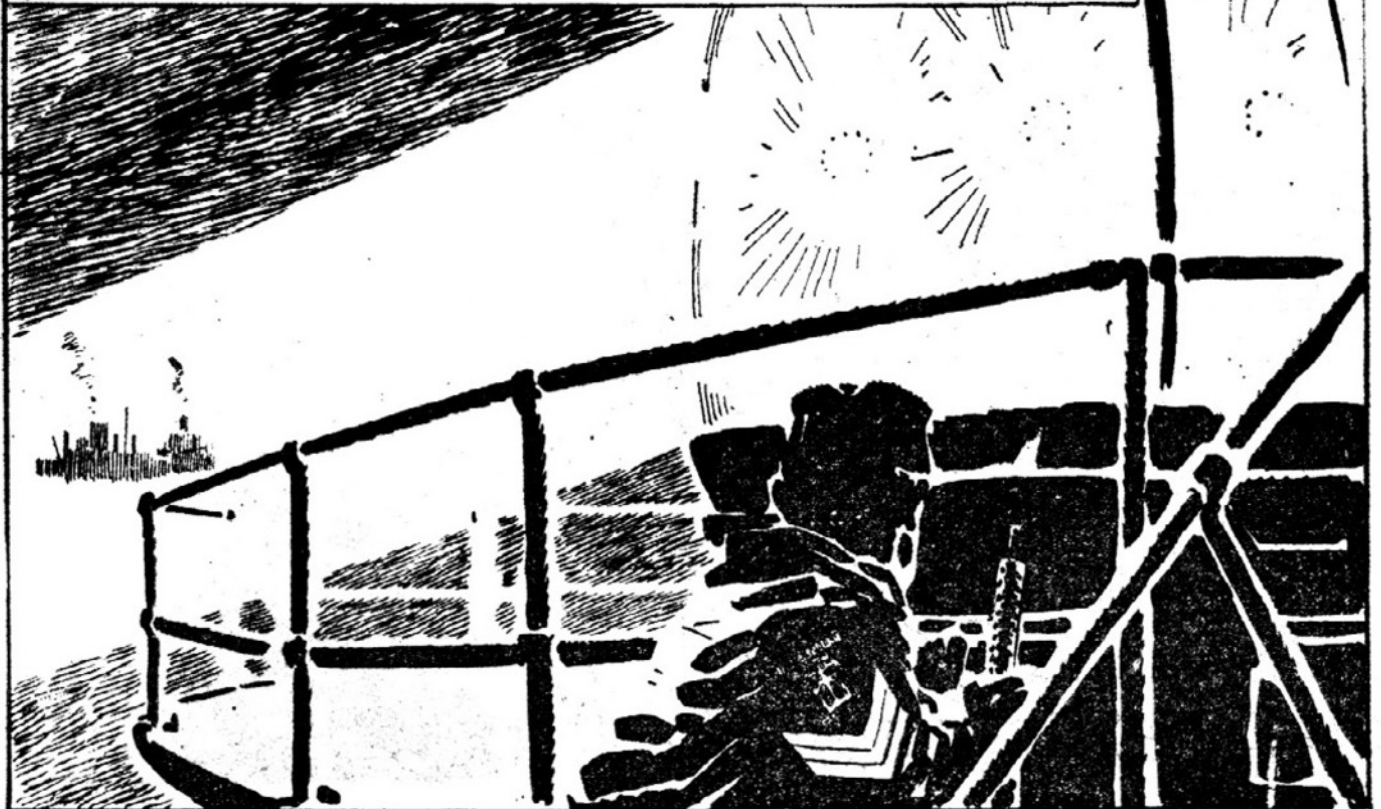
PROMPTED BY THE FAILURE OF THE LIGHTS ON THE BUOYS, THE GERMAN OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE LIGHTHOUSE GUARD HAD SWITCHED ON THE POWERFUL LANTERN. HE WAS A BRAVE MAN, BUT A STUPID ONE...



SILENT AS SHADOWS, THE TWO MARINE COMMANDOS BEACHED THEIR CANOE AND SLIPPED ACROSS THE FIFTY YARDS OF BARE ROCK TOWARDS THE SQUAT LIGHTHOUSE. A GUTTURAL VOICE MUTTERED SUDDENLY IN THE DARKNESS...



WITH ONE QUICK DASH, THE TWO MARINES REACHED THE LADDER CLAMPED TO THE COLD STONES OF THE LIGHTHOUSE AND BEGAN TO CLIMB UPWARDS. THE POWERFUL BEAMS CIRCLED CEASELESSLY TO GUIDE THE ENEMY CONVOY HOME.



STEEL MUSCLES TAKING THE WEIGHT OF HIS BODY ON HIS FOREARMS, SERGEANT SWIFT PULLED HIMSELF ON TO THE NARROW WALKWAY ROUND THE LANTERN.

THIS IS THE
DODGY BIT, BOB!
EASY NOW!



SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE GLARING LANTERN, THE SERGEANT TAMPED THE HIGH EXPLOSIVE CAREFULLY AGAINST THE HOT GLASS AND REACHED FOR THE DETONATOR.



OUT OF THE SANDBAGGED DEFENCE POST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LIGHTHOUSE, THE STOLID GERMAN OFFICER SUDDENLY STROLLED. FROM THERE, THE TWO COMMANDOS WERE HIDDEN.

THE FOOLS ARE
JITTERY TONIGHT!
WHAT DO THEY EXPECT
TO SEE - GHOSTS?



BUT AS HE ROUNDED THE LIGHTHOUSE, THE GERMAN GLANCED COMPLACENTLY UPWARD AT THE GLOWING LANTERN—AND STIFFENED IN STARK AMAZEMENT.



HIMMEL!
SABOTEURS!

FRANTICALLY THE GERMAN PULLED THE LUGER PISTOL FROM HIS HOLSTER AND PULLED THE TRIGGER. BUT BOB WAS QUICKER....



TROUBLE,
SARGE!

DETONATORS
FIXED! LET'S
GO!

Up the Marines!

COOLLY THE TWO MARINES TURNED TO MEET THEIR BRAYING ENEMIES. THE JOB WAS DONE. NOW THEY WERE READY TO SHOOT THEIR WAY OUT TO SAFETY.





A BURST OF AUTOMATIC FIRE RIPPED BOB YOUNGER'S FINGERS BRUTALLY FROM THE LADDER. AS HE TOPPLED, SERGEANT SWIFT TWISTED DOWN TO SUPPORT HIS LIMP BODY AND TURNED SAVAGELY AT BAY...



Up the Marines!

THE BULLETS SPITTING AT THEM FROM THE LADDER FLUNG THE GERMAN SOLDIERS COWERING FOR COVER.



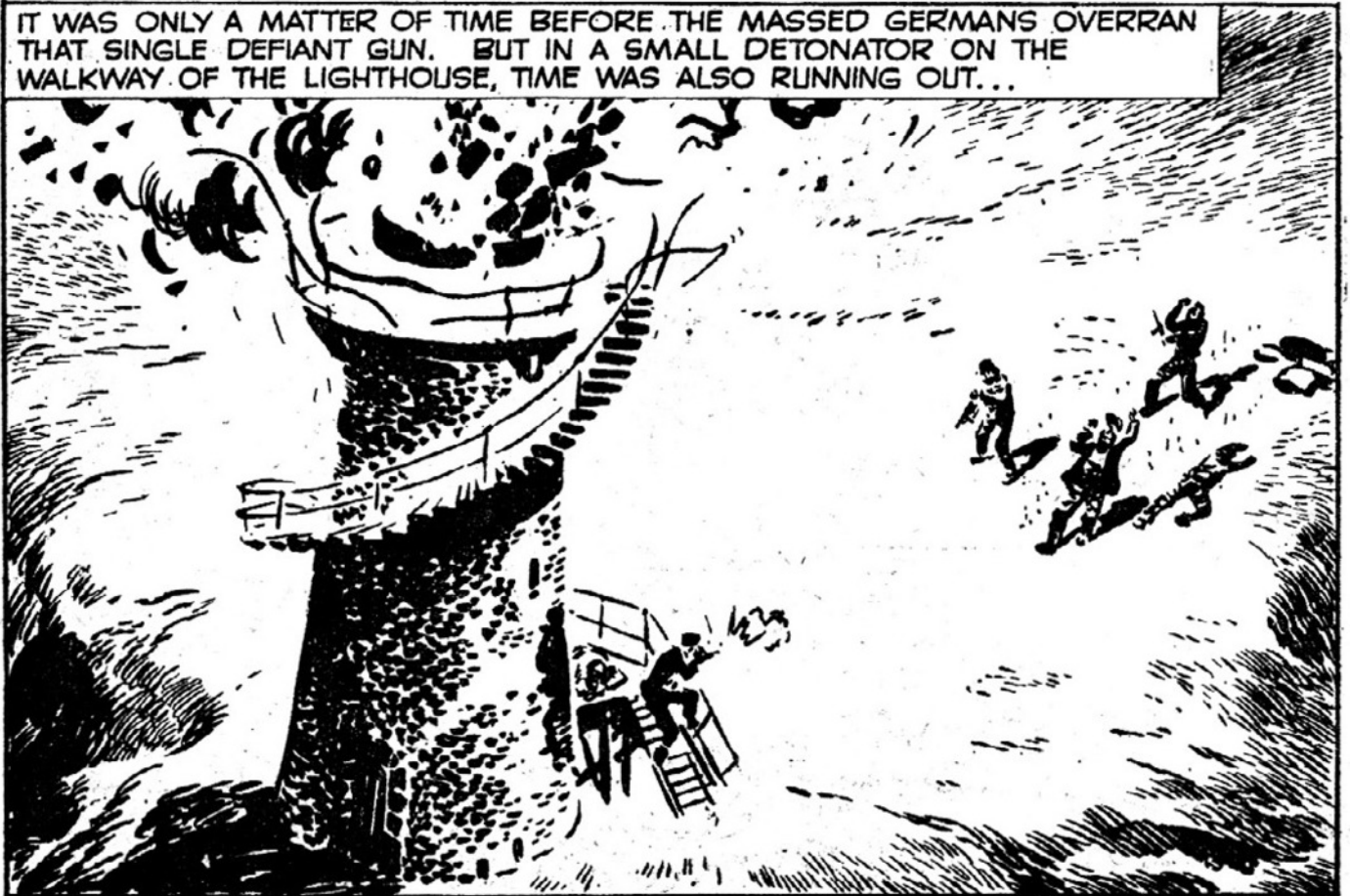
A SECOND VICIOUS BURST FROM THE STEN GUN FLATTENED THE GERMAN HEADS. IN THE MOMENT OF RESPITE HE HAD WON, THE SERGEANT TURNED TO LANCE CORPORAL YOUNGER...



THE YOUNG MARINE COMMANDO WAS DEAD. THAT SINGLE BURST MUST HAVE KILLED HIM OUTRIGHT, AND NOW HIS SERGEANT TURNED TO FACE HIS OWN VIOLENT END WITH A DEADLY IMPLACABLE ANGER.



IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE MASSED GERMANS OVERRAN THAT SINGLE DEFIANT GUN. BUT IN A SMALL DETONATOR ON THE WALKWAY OF THE LIGHTHOUSE, TIME WAS ALSO RUNNING OUT...



THAT SHATTERING EXPLOSION RIPPED THE TOP OFF THE LIGHTHOUSE WITH DEVASTATING VIOLENCE. NUMBED BY SHOCK AND PELTED WITH SCORCHING FRAGMENTS OF GLASS, THE GERMANS TURNED IN PANIC AND RAN.

THIS IS MY CHANCE AND I'VE GOT TO TAKE IT! POOR OLD BOB!



FOR ONE BRIEF MOMENT, SERGEANT SWIFT HESITATED. BUT HIS YOUNG COMRADE WAS DEAD, AND HE WOULD NEVER BEAT THE GERMANS TO THE CANOE BURDENED WITH THAT HUDDLED BODY. GRIMLY HE TURNED AWAY...

I HOPE THE SUB'S WAITED! THAT JERRY CONVOY MUST BE PRETTY CLOSE!



BEHIND THE LONE SURVIVOR OF THAT DARING RAID, THE LIGHTHOUSE WAS A BLINDED AND SHATTERED STUMP. AGAIN THE FIORD WAS PLUNGED INTO DEADLY DARKNESS. AGAIN A GERMAN OFFICER SWEATED WITH FEAR.



SERGEANT SWIFT'S CANOE SLID EASILY INTO THE WATER. WITH THREE POWERFUL STROKES, IT WAS OUT OF RANGE OF THE GUARD'S FEEBLE VENGEANCE.



Up the Marines!

BLEATING LIKE LOST SHEEP, THE CARGO SHIPS OF THE GERMAN CONVOY SCATTERED IN PANIC-STRICKEN CONFUSION. ALREADY THEIR DESTROYER, DELUDED BY THE DARKNESS, HAD IMPALED ITSELF ON THE FANGED ROCKS.



ON THE DESTROYER'S CRAZILY CANTED BRIDGE, THE GERMAN COMMANDER HOWLED WITH RAGE.



MY CONVOY
IS SHATTERED AND
MY SHIP WRECKED!
WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE
FOR THIS, I WILL HAVE
HIS BLOOD!

THE MAN WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT CHAOS WAS EVEN THEN COOLLY ESCAPING FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE GERMANS. BUT IN HIS CANOE THERE WAS AN EMPTY SEAT...



A FEW HUNDRED YARDS AWAY, THE BRITISH SUBMARINE WAITED...



EAGER HANDS HELPED THE EXHAUSTED N.C.O. ON TO THE SLIPPERY STEEL HULL.



THE MARINE COMMANDOS GATHERED JUBILANTLY AROUND THEIR SERGEANT IN THE SUBMARINE'S CONTROL ROOM.



ONLY SERGEANT SWIFT WAS NOT SMILING IN THAT HAPPY COMPANY...



THAT JERRY CONVOY IS A SITTING TARGET FOR THE R.A.F. BOMBERS NOW, THANKS TO YOU, SERGEANT! YOU'VE ENSURED THE SUCCESS OF THIS OPERATION! I'M PUTTING YOU AND THE LANCE CORPORAL FORWARD FOR DECORATIONS!

THE LANCE CORPORAL WON'T NEED HIS NOW, SIR!

A SUBTLE AND POISONOUS REGRET WAS BITING INTO THE YOUNG VETERAN'S HEART...



GET THIS STRAIGHT, SERGEANT. IF YOU HADN'T USED YOUR INITIATIVE, THAT CONVOY WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN WRECKED!

NO, SIR... AND BOB YOUNGER WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN KILLED...

A FRIEND HAD DIED, AND THE SERGEANT WOULD NOT FORGET THAT, HOWEVER MUCH PRAISE HE WAS GIVEN...



THERE GOES A BRAVE MAN, LIEUTENANT!

THERE GOES A MARINE, CAPTAIN!

Chapter 2. DISAPPOINTED RAIDER

TWO DAYS LATER, WORD REACHED THE ROYAL MARINE BARRACKS ON THE SOUTH COAST THAT COASTAL COMMAND MOSQUITOES HAD BOMBED AND DESTROYED THE STRANDED SHIPS OF THAT CONVOY IN THE NORWEGIAN FIORD. TWO MONTHS AFTER THAT, IN THE FORECOURT OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE...



SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT HAD BEEN AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL FOR HIS VALOUR THAT NIGHT, AND LANCE CORPORAL BOB YOUNGER HAD BEEN POSTHUMOUSLY DECORATED, TOO. NOW, AT THE PALACE GATES...



Up the Marines!

AFTER THE INVESTITURE, SERGEANT SWIFT AND THE YOUNG CIVILIAN HAD TEA TOGETHER. AND THE YOUNGSTER TALKED...



THE TOUGH MARINE SERGEANT FELT A STRONG SYMPATHY FOR THE BOY WHO REMINDED HIM OF HIS LOST COMRADE.

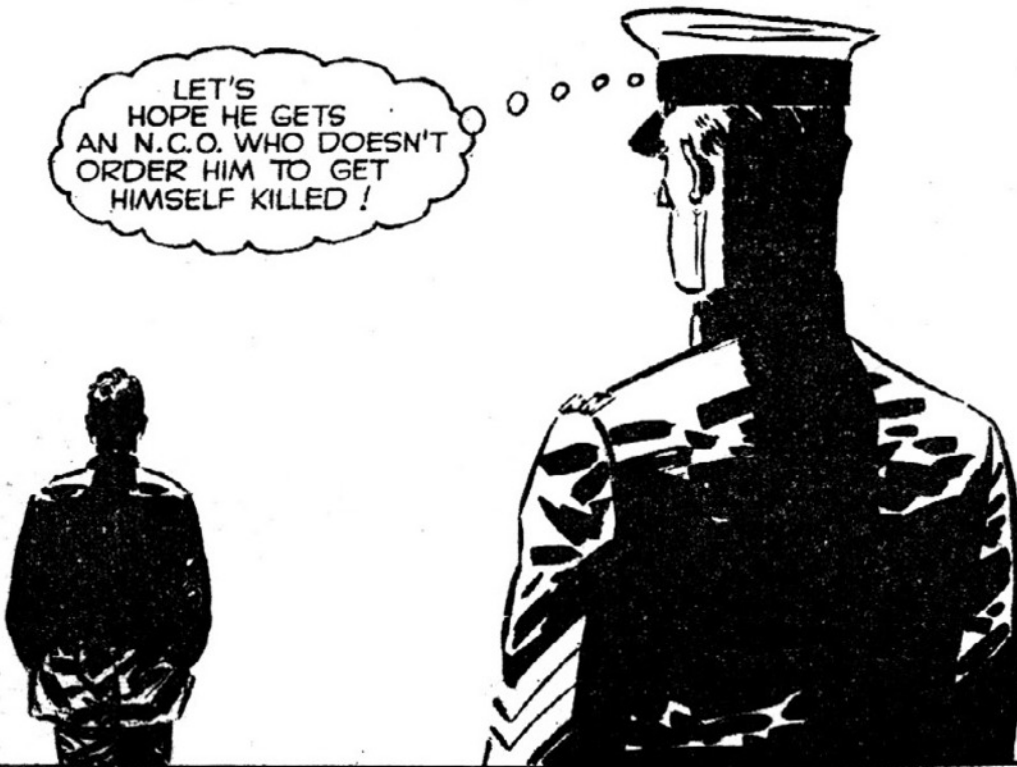


AT THAT QUESTION, TEDDY YOUNGER GRINNED.



THE REPLY CAUGHT SERGEANT SWIFT UNAWARES. THE EAGERNESS OF THE BOY REMINDED HIM UNBEARABLY OF THE CHEERFUL BOB YOUNGER. NOW THE SERGEANT REMEMBERED... AND HATED HIMSELF.

LET'S
HOPE HE GETS
AN N.C.O. WHO DOESN'T
ORDER HIM TO GET
HIMSELF KILLED!



IN THE SIX MONTHS WHICH FOLLOWED THAT STRANGE MEETING, AT THE PALACE, SIX MONTHS FILLED WITH TOUGH TRAINING AND VIOLENT ACTION, THE SERGEANT BEGAN TO FORGET THE UNHAPPY PAST. BUT ONE DAY IN THE SPRING OF 1944...

AH, SERGEANT!
ORDERS HAVE COME
THROUGH FOR ANOTHER
STUNT! COME TO MY
OFFICE, WILL YOU?

RIGHT,
SIR!



Up the Marines!

LIEUTENANT MOOREHEAD LED THE SERGEANT TO THE ORDERLY ROOM...

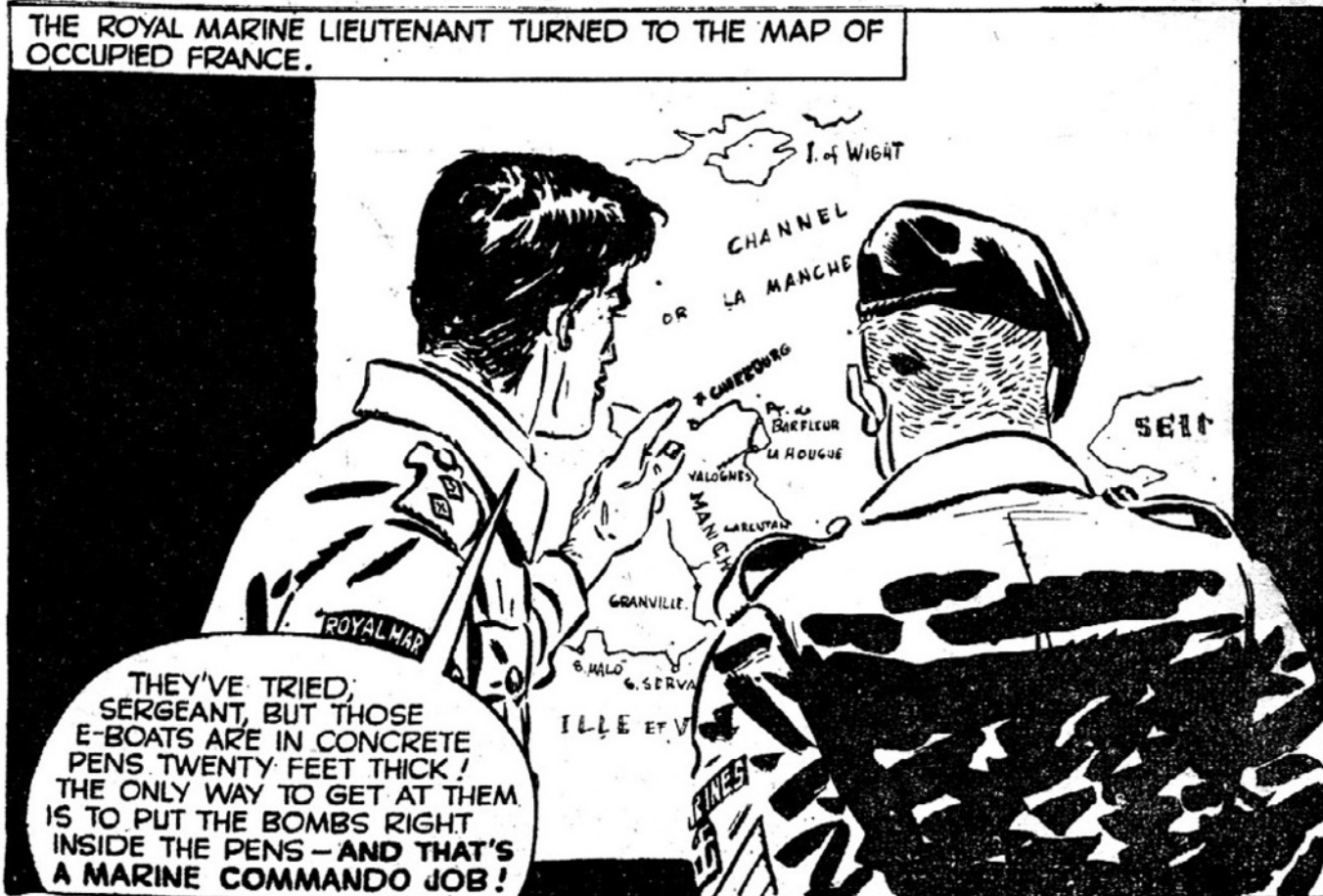
BETWEEN YOU AND ME, SERGEANT, THINGS ARE BREWING UP FOR THE BIG PUSH! BUT THE JERRIES ARE GATHERING E-BOT FLOTILLAS AT POINTS ALL ALONG THE ATLANTIC WALL! THESE E-BOATS COULD CREATE HAVOC AMONG OUR LANDING CRAFT, SO WE'VE GOT TO SMASH THEM FIRST!

WHY DOESN'T THE R.A.F. BOMB THEM, SIR?



THE ROYAL MARINE LIEUTENANT TURNED TO THE MAP OF OCCUPIED FRANCE.

THEY'VE TRIED, SERGEANT, BUT THOSE E-BOATS ARE IN CONCRETE PENS TWENTY FEET THICK! THE ONLY WAY TO GET AT THEM IS TO PUT THE BOMBS RIGHT INSIDE THE PENS - AND THAT'S A MARINE COMMANDO JOB!



COOLLY, WEIGHING UP THE NEEDS OF THE NEW OPERATION, THE SERGEANT TURNED TO GO. BUT LIEUTENANT MOOREHEAD STOPPED HIM...



FROM THE DESK IN THE ROOM, A YOUNG MARINE GOT UP AND FACED THE SERGEANT...



Up the Marines!

EVER SINCE HE HAD JOINED THE ROYAL MARINES SIX MONTHS BEFORE, TEDDY YOUNGER HAD FOUGHT TO JOIN HIS BROTHER'S OLD UNIT. AND NOW...

YOU'RE NOT PLEASED, ARE YOU, SERGEANT? WHY? BECAUSE I'M COMING ON THE RAID, OR BECAUSE THE LIEUTENANT'S CREWED ME UP WITH YOU?



YOU'RE DREAMING, KID! OF COURSE I'M PLEASED YOU'RE COMING WITH ME! NOW CUT ALONG TO THE MESS, AND TELL THE CHAPS TO REPORT TO THE ARMOURY!

THE SERGEANT'S VOICE WAS BRISK... THE YOUNG MARINE HAD REMINDED HIM OF THE PAST. AND IN THE ARMOURY LATER...

LOOK AT THE KID! HE'S AS PLEASED AS THOUGH THEY'D GIVEN HIM A NEW TOY TO PLAY WITH!

HE'S A YOUNGER, MATE! THEY'RE A TOUGH FAMILY IF THEY ALL TAKE AFTER OLD BOB!



WATCHING THAT EAGER YOUNGSTER, SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT MADE A SOLEMN VOW...



LATER THAT NIGHT, A SMALL PARTY OF SILENT MEN MARCHED FROM THE MARINE BARRACKS TO THE JETTY. WAITING WITH THROBBING ENGINES FOR THE TURN OF THE TIDE WERE THREE SLEEK BOATS.



IN THE MOONLIT DARKNESS, THE THREE MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS SLIPPED THEIR CABLES AND HEADED SOUTH. THE ENEMY COAST LAY AHEAD, AND A NEW TARGET FOR THE TOUGH AND DARING MEN OF THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO.



THE TARGET WAS THE PENS AT LA BRUYLE ON THE FRENCH COAST, BATTERED BY THE ROYAL AIR FORCE BOMBERS BUT STILL INTACT AND SHELTERING BENEATH THEIR THICK CONCRETE SLABS A DEVIL'S BROOD OF GERMAN E-BOATS.



GENTLY THE BRITISH M.T.B'S SIDLED TOWARDS THE HOSTILE COASTLINE.



TRICKED BY SHARP MEMORIES, THE SERGEANT'S TONGUE SLIPPED. BUT TEDDY YOUNGER WAS TOO EAGER TO NOTICE IT. ALREADY THE ENEMY-HELD HARBOUR WAS VISIBLE AHEAD.



THERE WOULD BE GUARDS ON THE SEAWARD SIDE OF THE HARBOUR MOLE TO REPEL A NORMAL ATTACK. INSIDE THE HARBOUR ITSELF THERE WOULD BE NO DEFENCES... THE GERMANS HAD NOT YET LEARNED THAT THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS WERE NO ORDINARY SOLDIERS...



Up the Marines!

SILENT AS DEATH, THE CANOES FLOATED INTO THE UNSUSPECTING HEART OF THE GERMAN DEFENCES. THE GUARD AT THE END OF THE MOLE PEERED STOLIDLY SEAWARD. THIS WAS A BORING DUTY, BUT IT WOULD NOT BORE HIM MUCH LONGER...



GRIM HANDS FROM THE SILENT DARKNESS TOOK THE GUARD BY THE THROAT. FOR A DESPERATE MOMENT HE STRUGGLED, BUT THE HANDS WERE STRONG. EVEN AS THE HOBNAILED BOOTS TURNED LIMPLY UPWARDS, MEN WERE MOVING QUIETLY ON THE MOLE.



COOLLY LIEUTENANT MOOREHEAD GAVE HIS ORDERS!

THE PENS ARE ON THE INNER WALL OF THE HARBOUR, SERGEANT! YOU KNOW THE DRILL... EACH PAIR TAKES A PEN! DETONATORS TIMED FOR TEN MINUTES! WE'LL ALL BE BACK HERE BY THEN, AND THE EXPLOSIONS WILL COVER OUR GETAWAY.

UNDERSTOOD, SIR!



IN PAIRS, THE COMMANDOS LOPED AWAY INTO THE HOSTILE DARKNESS. FOR ONE YOUNG MARINE, THIS WAS HIS FIRST HEADY TASTE OF VIOLENT ACTION...

STAY CLOSE TO ME, TEDDY!

ALL RIGHT, SARGE, ALL RIGHT!



Up the Marines!

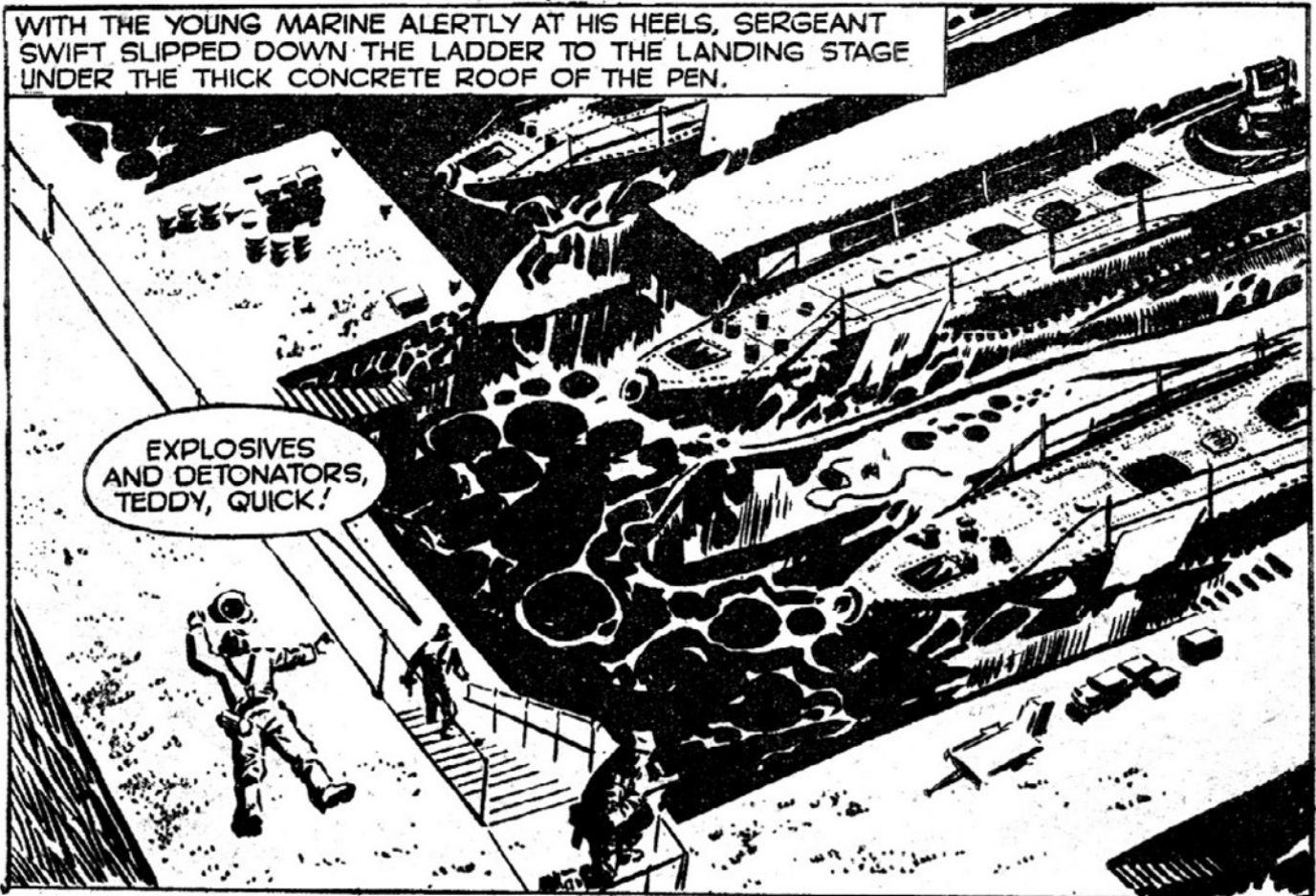
IMPATIENTLY, TEDDY YOUNGER SHRUGGED OFF THE PROTECTIVE NOTE IN HIS SERGEANT'S VOICE. HE WAS A MARINE, WASN'T HE? THIS WAS HIS JOB. . .



ALL OVER THE HARBOUR OF LA BRUYLE THAT NIGHT, THE GERMAN GUARDS DISCOVERED, TOO LATE, THE DEADLY SECRET OF THE DARKNESS WHICH RUSTLED. . .



WITH THE YOUNG MARINE ALERTLY AT HIS HEELS, SERGEANT SWIFT SLIPPED DOWN THE LADDER TO THE LANDING STAGE UNDER THE THICK CONCRETE ROOF OF THE PEN.



THE SERGEANT TAMPED THREE CHARGES OF EXPLOSIVE AMONG THE THIN-HULLED E-BOATS. IT WAS A DEFT AND QUIET OPERATION... TOO QUIET FOR PRIVATE TEDDY YOUNGER.

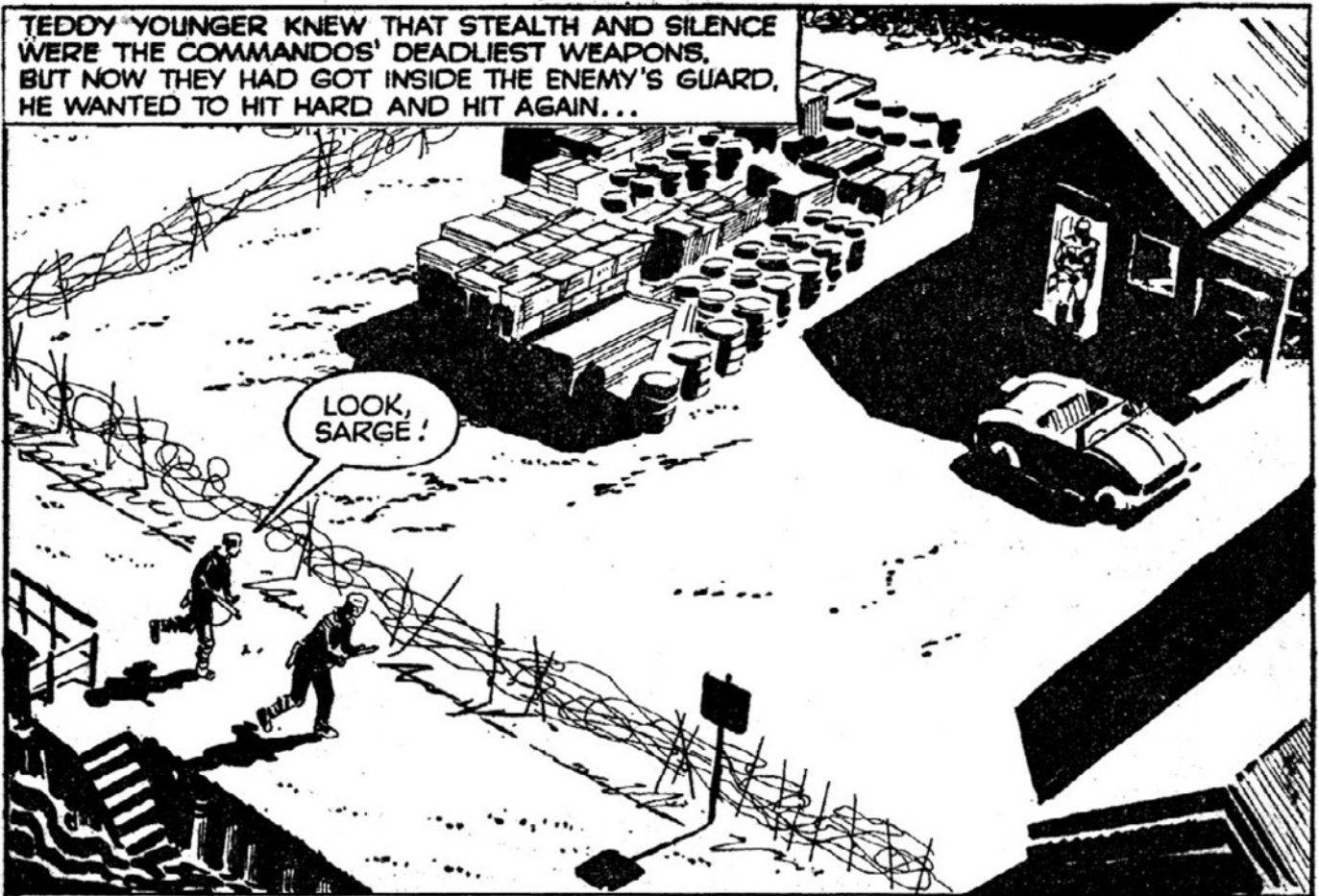


GLUMLY THE YOUNG MARINE FOLLOWED HIS SERGEANT BACK TO THE LADDER.



Up the Marines!

TEDDY YOUNGER KNEW THAT STEALTH AND SILENCE WERE THE COMMANDOS' DEADLIEST WEAPONS. BUT NOW THEY HAD GOT INSIDE THE ENEMY'S GUARD. HE WANTED TO HIT HARD AND HIT AGAIN...



ACROSS THE JETTY, SURROUNDED BY A THICK BARBED WIRE FENCE, LAY A MASSIVE DUMP OF AMMUNITION AND PETROL. SERGEANT SWIFT'S EYES GLEAMED HUNGRILY.



THE SERGEANT'S EXPRESSION HAD CHANGED SUDDENLY. NOW A GRIM RESOLVE STAMPED THE EAGERNESS OUT OF HIS FACE.

NO, TEDDY!
IT'S TOO RISKY!
THE DUMP'S STIFF
WITH GUARDS! NO,
WE'D BEST GET BACK
TO THE CANOES!

BUT,
SARGE...

BEWILDERED BY THE COMMANDO VETERAN'S SUDDEN CHANGE OF MIND, TEDDY TURNED PROTESTINGLY TO FOLLOW HIM WHEN...

HIMMEL!

THE PENS
ARE HIT! QUICKLY,
COMRADES!

Up the Marines!

THE FIRST PREMATURE EXPLOSION HAD RIPPED THE HEAVY CONCRETE ROOF OF AN E-BOAT PEN APART LIKE PAPER AND FLUNG THE PIECES SKYWARD IN A WHIRLWIND OF FLAME. ALARMED, THE GUARDS INSIDE THE AMMUNITION DUMP POURED OUT OF THE OPEN GATE...



NOW'S OUR
CHANCE, SARGE!
THE GATE'S
OPEN!

I SAID 'NO'!
WE'VE DONE THE
JOB WE WERE
ORDERED TO DO! BACK
TO THE CANOES,
COME ON!

ONCE MORE, SERGEANT SWIFT HAD REFUSED THE YOUNGSTER'S PLEA. THE VITAL DUMP LAY WIDE OPEN NOW TO A BOLD COMMANDO SORTIE, BUT IT WAS NOT GOING TO BE THE SERGEANT WHO WOULD MAKE IT...



HONESTLY,
SARGE, WE COULD
STILL GET IN
THERE...

SHUT UP,
YOUNGSTER, AND
OBEY ORDERS!
FOLLOW ME TO
THE CANOES!

BITTERLY, PRIVATE TEDDY YOUNGER FOLLOWED THE SILENT N.C.O. BACK ALONG THE JETTY AND ON TO THE MOLE. BEHIND THEM, EXPLOSION AFTER EXPLOSION SHATTERED THE GERMANS' PATIENT HANDIWORK.



IT WAS FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE FIRST OF THE COMMANDO TEAMS, GRINNING WITH TRIUMPH, RAN UP TO JOIN THE TIGHT-LIPPED SERGEANT AND THE FUMING PRIVATE YOUNGER.



Up the Marines!

THE YOUNG MARINE COMMANDO LOOKED WITH FIERCE CONTEMPT AT SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT. AND STILL THE VETERAN SAID NOTHING.



NO E-BOATS WOULD SAIL OUT OF LA BRUYLE TO CHALLENGE THE ALLIED INVASION FLEET WHEN THE GREAT DAY DAWNED. THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO HAD GOT THERE FIRST, AND THE TEETH OF THE GERMAN NAVY HAD BEEN DRAWN.



AS THE MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SLID OUT TOWARDS THE OPEN SEA, TEDDY YOUNGER'S CUP OF BITTERNESS WAS FILLED...



THE BITING CONTEMPT IN THE YOUNGSTER'S VOICE AT LAST IMPELLED THE SERGEANT TO SPEAK. BUT IT WAS TOO LATE...



SADLY, SERGEANT SWIFT STOOD WATCHING THE DEJECTED YOUNG PRIVATE. HE HAD DISAPPOINTED THE BOY, BUT HE HAD HIS REASONS...



Chapter 3. BETWEEN DEATH AND GLORY

FOR THE NEXT THREE DAYS, AS THE TOUGH MARINE COMMANDOS RESUMED THEIR STRICT BARRACK LIFE, PRIVATE YOUNGER AVOIDED HIS SERGEANT. ON THE FOURTH DAY...



TEDDY YOUNGER'S FACE WAS STERN AND DETERMINED AS HE MARCHED UP TO THE DESK. HE DID NOT LOOK AT SERGEANT SWIFT.



RIGIDLY, THE YOUNG PRIVATE TURNED ON HIS HEEL. THE SERGEANT'S VOICE WAS QUIET...

I'D LIKE TO HAVE A WORD WITH THE LAD, SIR! I THINK I MAY KNOW WHAT'S TROUBLING HIM!

DO THEN, SERGEANT! DEUCED AWKWARD TO TRANSFER HIM WITH THE BIG SHOW ONLY TWO WEEKS AWAY!

AS SERGEANT SWIFT CAME UP TO TEDDY ON THE BARRACK SQUARE, THE YOUNGSTER TURNED ON HIM DEFIANTLY...

LOOK, TEDDY, I KNOW YOU'RE SORE AT WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT JETTY, BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...

NO, SARGE, I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

Up the Marines!

WHEN A MAN DISCOVERS THAT HIS BOYHOOD HERO HAS FEET OF CLAY, THE MOMENT IS A BITTER ONE...

MY BROTHER TAUGHT ME TO RESPECT YOU. HE USED TO SAY YOU WERE THE BRAVEST MAN IN THE MARINE COMMANDOS! ALL I CAN SAY IS... YOU'VE CHANGED SINCE YOU FOUGHT WITH HIM!

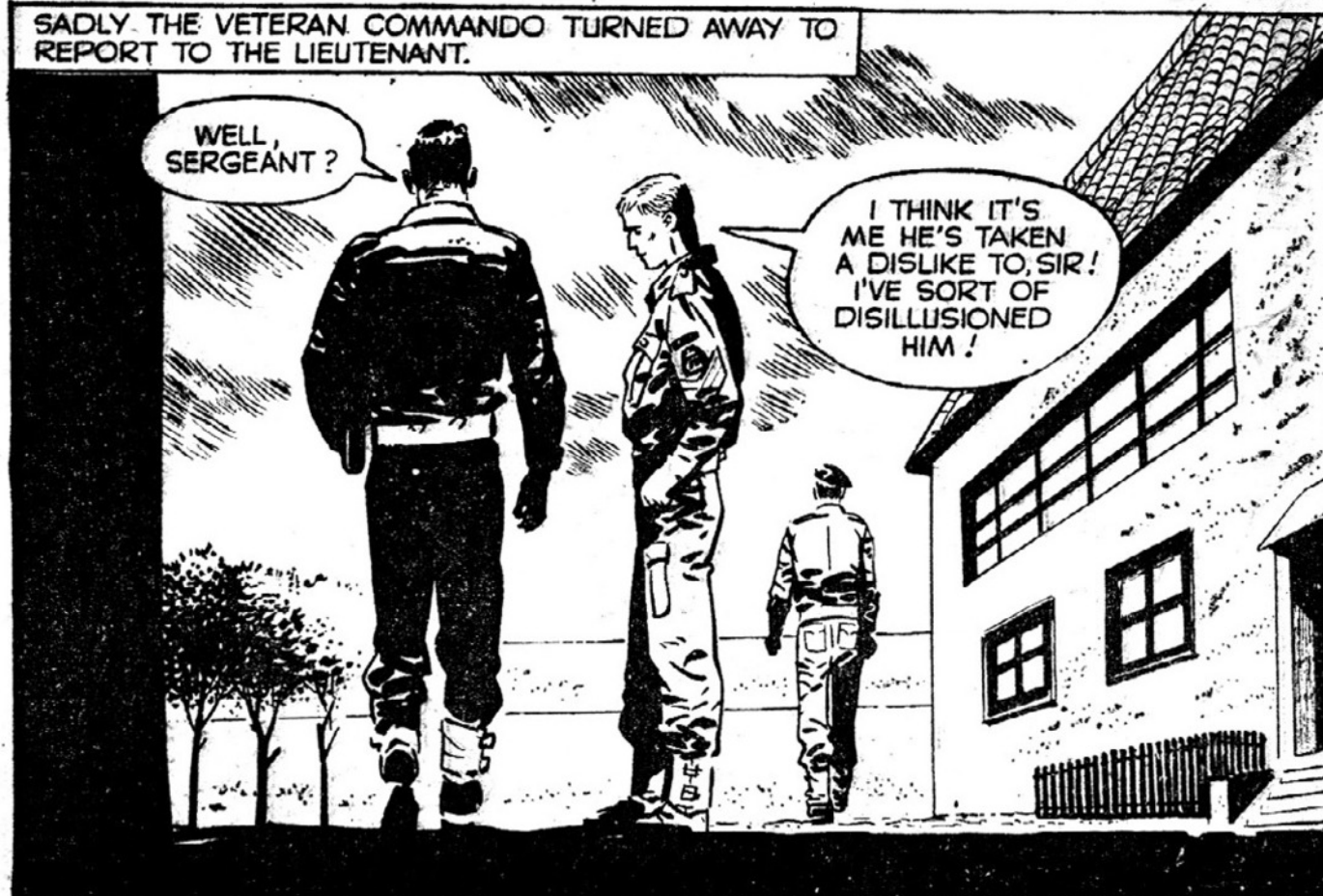
YES, TEDDY, PERHAPS I HAVE!



SADLY THE VETERAN COMMANDO TURNED AWAY TO REPORT TO THE LIEUTENANT.

WELL, SERGEANT?

I THINK IT'S ME HE'S TAKEN A DISLIKE TO, SIR! I'VE SORT OF DISILLUSIONED HIM!



THE REASON FOR THE SERGEANT'S CAUTION THAT NIGHT ON THE JETTY LAY TOO DEEP FOR WORDS. IN SILENCE HE WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THE YOUNGSTER'S CONTEMPT.

WELL, THERE'LL BE NO TIME TO TRANSFER THE LAD BEFORE THE BIG SHOW, SERGEANT! HOW WOULD IT BE IF I CREWED HIM UP WITH SOMEONE ELSE?



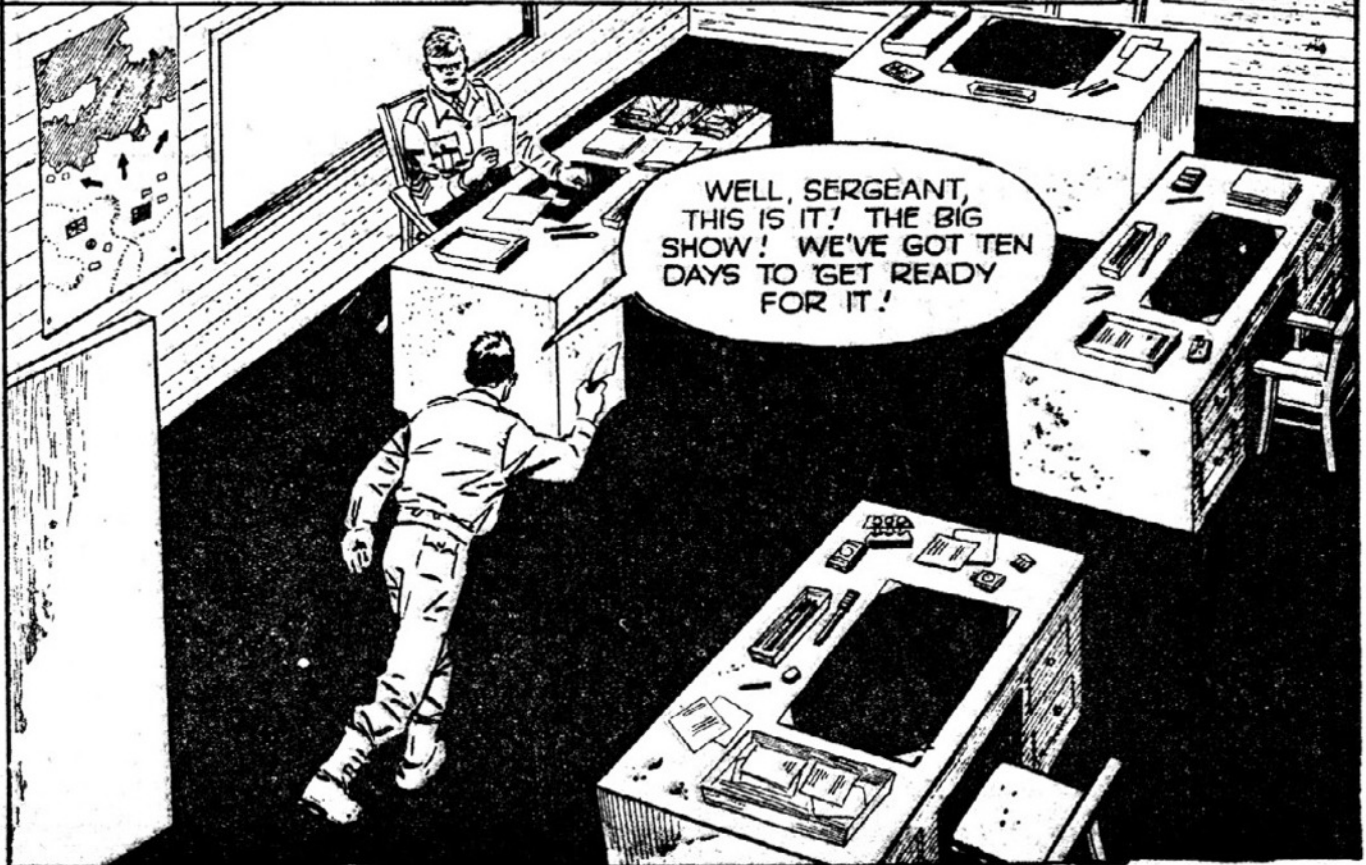
IF THAT'S THE WAY HE WANTS IT, SIR, THAT'S THE WAY IT HAS TO BE!

BUT IN THE DAYS WHICH FOLLOWED, SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT BROODED OVER THE PAPERWORK WHICH WAS THE BACKGROUND OF ACTION.

WHATEVER THE YOUNGSTER THINKS OF ME, I'M NOT RISKING ANOTHER MAN'S LIFE UNLESS THE ORDERS SAY SO!



IT WAS BY THEN THE EARLY SUMMER OF 1944. AND THAT MORNING, AS THE SERGEANT LOOKED UP GLOOMILY FROM HIS WORK...



WELL, SERGEANT, THIS IS IT! THE BIG SHOW! WE'VE GOT TEN DAYS TO GET READY FOR IT!

Up the Marines!

THIS WAS D-DAY MINUS TEN. IN A FEW DAYS TIME, HISTORY WOULD BE WRITTEN IN BLOOD ON THE BEACHES OF NORMANDY, AND THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS WOULD HELP TO WRITE IT.



WITH ONE DAY TO GO, LIEUTENANT MOOREHEAD BRIEFED HIS MEN...

THE REGULARS ARE GOING IN ON THIS BEACH HERE! ABOVE IT TO THE WEST THERE'S A HUNDRED-FOOT CLIFF AND ON THE TOP OF THAT CLIFF THE JERRIES HAVE SITED A BATTERY COVERING THE BEACH! OUR JOB IS TO GO IN FIRST, CLIMB THAT CLIFF, AND SILENCE THE BATTERY!



Up the Marines!

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D-DAY MINUS ONE. AT A SOUTH COAST PORT, THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS EMBARKED ON A DESTROYER WHICH WAS TO TAKE THEM TO THEIR DATE WITH DESTINY.



SOON AFTER MIDNIGHT, THE DESTROYER SAILED. AND ON ITS DECK, A YOUNG PRIVATE APPROACHED HIS SERGEANT...



TEDDY YOUNGER HAD MADE HIS PEACE WITH THE MAN HE HAD ONCE ADMIRER. FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, SERGEANT SWIFT WAS TEMPTED TO TELL THE YOUNG MARINE WHAT HAD MADE HIM HOLD BACK ON THAT WILD NIGHT, BUT NOW TIME WAS RUNNING OUT...



IN AN UNCANNY SILENCE, THE LANDING CRAFT SLID IN TOWARDS THE ENEMY SHORE. WITH A GRATING CRASH, THE RAMPS OPENED. THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS WERE ABOUT TO BREACH THE SINISTER FORTRESS OF NAZI EUROPE.



STILL THE GUNS WERE SILENT. UNDER THE FROWNING WALL OF THAT SHEER CLIFF, THE COMMANDOS WAITED TENSELY...



Up the Marines!

FIRE BY THE ROCKET CHARGES, THE GRAPPLING HOOKS SNAKED ALOFT TO THE CLIFF TOP. AND FIVE HUNDRED YARDS AWAY, FROM THE UGLY SLITS OF A PILL BOX, MERCILESS EYES WATCHED AND WAITED...



A VICIOUS TUG ON THE LINES TO DRIVE THE STEEL PRONGS OF THE GRAPPLING HOOKS INTO THE TURF OF THE CLIFF TOP, AND THE COMMANDOS WERE SWARMING UPWARDS, HAND OVER HAND.



TOGETHER, THE VETERAN SERGEANT AND THE YOUNG PRIVATE CLIMBED GRIMLY UP THE SHEER FACE OF THE CLIFF TOWARDS THE UNKNOWN DANGERS AT THE TOP.

SPREAD OUT
AND KEEP DOWN
WHEN YOU REACH
THE TOP, MEN!



IN A TENSION-FILLED SILENCE, THE FIRST MEN OVER THE CLIFF TOP CROUCHED AND WAITED. AHEAD OF THEM, THE CONCRETE PILL BOX LOOMED. THE FIRST SHOTS IN THE BLOODY BATTLE FOR EUROPE HAD STILL TO BE FIRED.

WAIT
FOR IT,
MEN!



Up the Marines!



AT LIEUTENANT MOOREHEAD'S STIRRING CRY, THE MARINE COMMANDOS CHARGED WITH A TRADITION OF THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF DEATHLESS BRAVERY URGING THEM ON. AND IN THAT MOMENT, FROM THE SINISTER SLITS OF THE PILL BOX...



THAT STORM OF LEAD SWEEPED THE CLIFF TOP LIKE A SCYTHE, CUTTING DOWN THE MEN IN ITS PATH. FOR ONE BLIND MOMENT THEY KEPT ON COMING, THEN...

DOWN, MEN,
DOWN! YOU'LL NEVER
GET PAST THAT
PILL BOX
ALIVE!



Up the Marines!

SERGEANT SWIFT AND PRIVATE YOUNGER, ON THE END OF THE LINE, HAD DIVED FOR COVER BEHIND THE SAME GRASSY HILLOCK...

THAT PILL BOX HAS GOT TO BE SILENCED! IF WE DON'T SPIKE THE BATTERY, THAT BEACH DOWN THERE IS GOING TO BE A SLAUGHTERHOUSE WHEN THE REGULARS COME IN!

BUT IT'S SUICIDE OUT THERE, SARGE!



GRIMLY, THE SERGEANT SIZED UP THE DESPERATE SITUATION. ALREADY HIS MUSCLES HAD TENSED THEMSELVES FOR ACTION.

IT'LL BE SUICIDE IF THE WHOLE LOT OF US ATTACK, BUT THERE'S ANOTHER WAY... STOP HERE, KID!





AS THE MACHINE-GUNS IN THE PILL BOX SWUNG HUNGRILY TOWARDS THEIR PREY, PRIVATE TEDDY YOUNGER KNEW HIS HOUR HAD COME...



Up the Marines!

DROPPING TO ONE KNEE UNDER THE GROPING BULLETS, THE VETERAN MARINE TURNED SAVAGELY ON THE YOUNGSTER WHO HAD FOLLOWED HIM.



A LONG-NURSED GUILT BURST NOW INTO HOT ANGER AS SERGEANT SWIFT AND THE YOUNG PRIVATE LAY SIDE BY SIDE IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

GET THIS! YOUR BROTHER WAS KILLED BECAUSE I ORDERED HIM TO TAKE ONE RISK TOO MANY! I'M NOT TAKING ANOTHER MAN TO HIS DEATH IN THAT HELL OUT THERE! I'M GOING ALONE!



SUDDENLY TEDDY YOUNGER UNDERSTOOD WHY THE TOUGH SERGEANT HAD CHANGED SO STRANGELY SINCE HE HAD FOUGHT BESIDE HIS BROTHER.

SO THAT'S WHY YOU HELD ME BACK ON THE JETTY THAT NIGHT—BECAUSE YOU WOULDN'T RISK MY LIFE ON YOUR OWN INITIATIVE! BUT YOU'RE WRONG, SARGE, YOU'RE CRAZY WRONG!



FIERCELY THE YOUNGSTER FORCED THE TRUTH ON SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT...

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, TEDDY. I KILLED YOUR BROTHER!



YOU DIDN'T, SARGE! IT WAS YOUR DUTY TO GIVE HIM THAT ORDER AND HIS DUTY TO OBEY IT! HE'D HAVE DISOBEYED YOU IF YOU HADN'T TOLD HIM TO ATTACK! HE WAS A MARINE!



SLOWLY THE SERGEANT'S SENSE OF GUILT RETREATED UNDER THE ATTACK OF THAT URGENT YOUNG VOICE. AND NOW, AS THE TWO MEN LAY POISED BETWEEN DEATH AND GLORY...



IF I
THOUGHT
YOU MEANT
THAT, KID...

I'M A
MARINE, TOO,
SARGE, SO LET'S
GET GOING,
SHALL WE?

WITH A SAVAGE JOY IN HIS HEART, SERGEANT ALAN SWIFT GAVE THE ORDER THAT HUNDREDS OF BRAVE MEN HAD GIVEN IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE BEFORE HIM.



ALL RIGHT,
MARINE, FOLLOW
ME!

THE GUNS OF THE PILL BOX SWUNG FRANTICALLY RIGHT AND LEFT IN A VAIN ATTEMPT TO PIN DOWN THE TWO WEAVING FIGURES IN FRONT OF THEM. BUT THESE MEN WERE ROYAL MARINES...



WITH ONE LAST SAVAGE LUNGE, THE SERGEANT AND THE PRIVATE REACHED THE CONCRETE SHELL OF THE PILL BOX. THERE, THE LIVID GUNS COULD NOT REACH THEM. THEIR REVENGE WAS AT HAND...



Up the Marines!

AS THE GRENADES BURST VICIOUSLY INSIDE THE STRONG POINT WHICH HAD BECOME A DEATH TRAP FOR THE GERMAN SOLDIERS INSIDE IT, LIEUTENANT MOOREHEAD STRUGGLED PAINFULLY TO HIS FEET.

THE SERGEANT AND YOUNGER HAVE SPIKED THE PILL BOX, NOW FOR THE BATTERY — FORWARD!



THE ROYAL MARINES SWEEPED DOWN LIKE AN AVALANCHE OF STEEL ON THE DEFENDERS OF THE GERMAN BATTERY. AND AT THE DOOR OF THE PILL BOX, SERGEANT SWIFT AND PRIVATE YOUNGER GRIMLY FINISHED THEIR LETHAL JOB.



THE PILL BOX STOOD SILENT, EMPTY AND REEKING OF GUNSMOKE IN THE WAKE OF THE MARINES' ATTACK. THE GUNS WHICH MIGHT HAVE SWEEPED THE INVASION BEACH WOULD NEVER DEAL OUT DEATH AGAIN.



Up the Marines!

THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS HAD LED A GREAT ARMY THROUGH THE FROWNING GATES OF NAZI EUROPE. ONE OF THEM TURNED TO HIS SERGEANT FOR A FRESH ORDER TO ATTACK...



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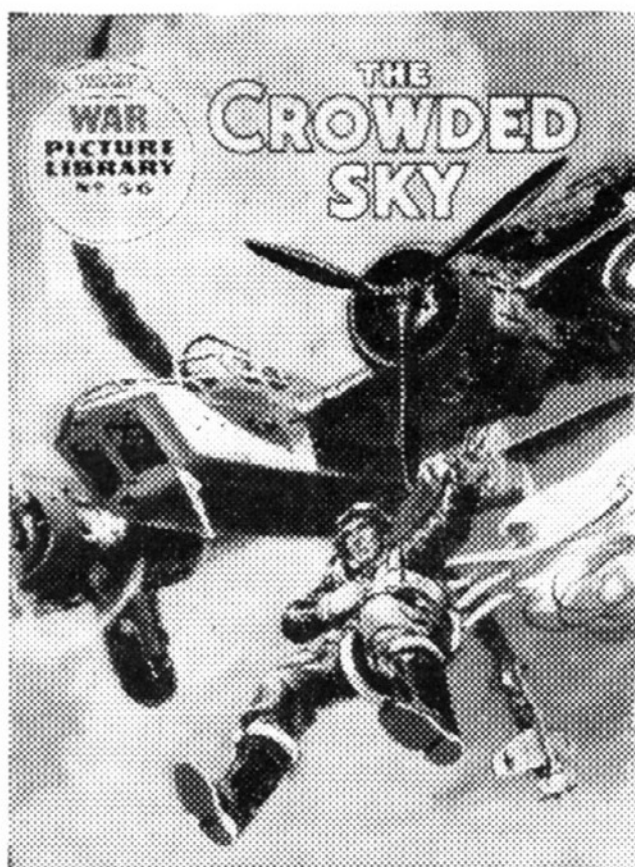
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